

Message Text

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PAGE 01 ADDIS 07110 161416Z

53

ACTION AF-06

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00

PA-01 USIA-06 PRS-01 SP-02 ERDA-05 AID-05 CEA-01

CIEP-01 COME-00 EB-07 FEAE-00 FPC-01 H-02 INT-05 L-03

NSC-05 OMB-01 PM-03 SAM-01 OES-03 SS-15 STR-04

TRSE-00 FRB-03 OPR-02 /103 W
----- 056020

R 161315Z JUN 75

FM AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4903

INFO AMCONSUL ASMARA

AMEMBASSY NAIROBI

AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM

AMEMBASSY MOGADISCIO

AMEMBASSY PARIS

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE ADDIS ABABA 7110

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: EGEN ENRG

SUBJECT: SUPPLY OF GASOLINE IN ADDIS REACHING CRITICALLY LOW
LEVELS

1. ACCORDING TO INDUSTRY SOURCES, GASOLINE SUPPLIES IN ADDIS ARE VERY LOW IN SPITE OF ARRIVAL OF LARGE CONVOY ON JUNE 11. ALTHOUGH THIS CONVOY SHOULD HAVE PROVIDED ENOUGH GASOLINE TO LAST 8-10 DAYS, ADDIS IS ALMOST OUT OF GASOLINE OWING TO INCREASED RATE OF CUSTOMER PURCHASES (HOARDING) AND THE NEED TO SEND SOME TANK TRUCKS ON TO OTHER LOCATIONS.

2. THE NEXT CONVOY OF TANKERS IS EXPECTED TO ARRIVE FROM ASSAB SOMETIME THIS WEEK AND ANOTHER CONVOY LEFT FOR ASSAB JUNE 15. SINCE CONVOYS ARE LARGE AND RUN ONLY DURING DAYLIGHT HOURS, IT NOW TAKES 5 DAYS TO MAKE THE TRIP FROM ASSAB TO
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PAGE 02 ADDIS 07110 161416Z

ADDIS. CONSEQUENTLY, THE CITY MAY CONTINUE TO EXPERIENCE

SPORADIC SHORTAGES UNTIL THE NEED FOR CONVOYS DISAPPEARS. IN THIS CONNECTION MOST SOURCES AGREE THAT THE FIRST CONVOY EXPERIENCED NO REPEAT NO HARASSMENT. NEVERTHELESS, DRIVERS ARE APPREHENSIVE THAT THEY MAY BE TARGETS FOR SNIPERS OR OTHER INSURGENCY ACTIONS. SECURITY CONSIDERATIONS PLUS THE ADDITIONAL COST OF OPERATING TANKERS OWING TO THE LONGER TIME TO MAKE THE TRIP ARE CAUSING SOME RELUCTANCE ON THE PART OF TRUCK OWNERS AND OPERATORS TO HAUL PETROLEUM PRODUCTS.

3. RESERVES HAVE BEEN SET ASIDE FOR THE MILITARY, VITAL INDUSTRIES AND OTHER IMPORTANT CUSTOMERS. THUS FAR THE GOVERNMENT HAS MADE NO PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENTS NOR HAS IT INSTITUTED ANY RATIONING EXCEPT BY LIMITING THE AMOUNT OF GASOLINE RELEASED TO SERVICE STATIONS.

4. JET FUEL FOR INTERNATIONAL AIRLINES COMES UP BY TRAIN FROM DJIBOUTI WHICH THUS FAR HAS NOT BEEN AFFECTED BY THE CURRENT SITUATION. DIRE DAWA ALSO GETS ITS GASOLINE SUPPLIES BY RAIL FROM DJIBOUTI AND THE SITUATION THERE IS REPORTEDLY NORMAL. PETROLEUM TRANSPORT CAPACITY BY RAIL IS COMMITTED TO THESE TWO TASKS WITH PRACTICALLY NO SURPLUS CAPACITY AVAILABLE TO SUPPLEMENT SHIPMENTS COMING TO ADDIS BY TANKER FROM ASSAB.

5. THE EMBASSY CURRENTLY HAS 35,000 LITERS OR ROUGHLY 7 WEEKS OF CONSUMPTION FOR OFFICIAL VEHICLES. EMBASSY AND MOBIL ARE ATTEMPTING TO MAKE SPECIAL ARRANGEMENTS TO PROVIDE GASOLINE TO THE PRIVATE VEHICLES OF US OFFICIALS.

6. COMMENT. UNTIL THE CONVOY SYSTEM IS EITHER BETTER OPERATED OR NO LONGER NECESSARY, ADDIS WILL ALMOST CERTAINLY EXPERIENCE SPORADIC SHORTAGES OF GASOLINE FOR PRIVATE VEHICLES. THE IMPACT THIS MAY HAVE AMONG THE CITIZENRY IS UNCLEAR FOR THE MOMENT ALTHOUGH IT IS REASONABLE TO EXPECT THAT TAXI DRIVERS, SHORT HAUL TRUCKERS, ETC. WILL SOON BECOME CONCERNED AND UNHAPPY ABOUT THE SITUATION AS THEY TEND TO DEPEND UPON DAILY BUSINESS TO MEET THEIR ECONOMIC REQUIREMENTS. THE REST OF THE POPULATION MAY EXPERIENCE SOME HARDSHIP BUT PROBABLY WILL NOT REACT AS QUICKLY AS THOSE MOST IMMEDIATELY AND DIRECTLY AFFECTED. EMBASSY WILL KEEP DEPARTMENT ADVISED REGARDING ITS OWN SITUATION.

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PAGE 03 ADDIS 07110 161416Z

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